Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please replace the paragraph on page 10, lines 15-24 of the specification, with the following:

The improved absorbencies achieved by the present method may be determined in vitro, or in vivo in appropriately conducted clinical evaluations. For example, either the well-known Syngyna Test (see the US Federal Register, Part III, Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration (21 CFR §801.430, April 1, 2001)), or the Plug Test (see Examples 5 and 6, below), or may be utilized for the in vitro measurement of the absorbencies exhibited by the ~~hygrothremally~~ hydrothermally treated lyocell fibers.

Please replace the paragraph on page 11, lines 16-24 of the specification, with the following:

Laboratory-made tampons having a mass of about 2.5 g were made to the general teaching of Friese et al., US Pat. No. ~~6,310,296~~ 6,310,269 , the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference. The tampons were then subjected to the Syngyna Test as described in the US Federal Register, Part III, Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration (21 CFR §801.430, April 1, 2001). The results are shown in Table 1, below: